TheHighlander

Thursday **Sept 11 2025** | Issue 706

INSIDE: OPP IDENTIFY HIKER 40 YEARS AFTER REMAINS FOUND PAGE 5

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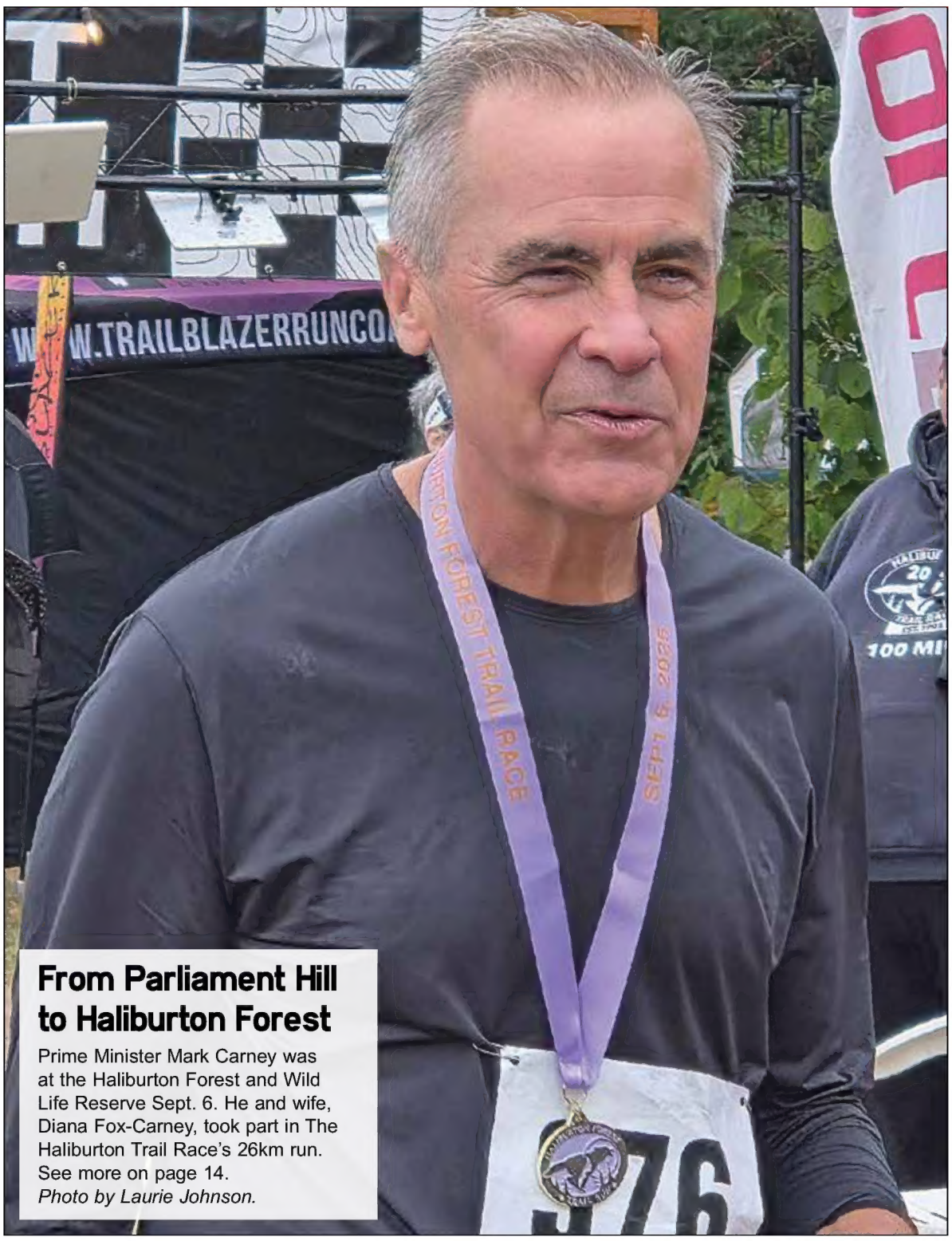

From Parliament Hill to Haliburton Forest

Prime Minister Mark Carney was at the Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve Sept. 6. He and wife, Diana Fox-Carney, took part in The Haliburton Trail Race's 26km run. See more on page 14.
Photo by Laurie Johnson.

Getting public into politics

By Mike Baker

Sean Pennylegion doesn't want to see history repeat itself during next year's municipal elections in Haliburton County, so he's helped launch a new movement meant to drum up political interest ahead of the Oct. 26, 2026 vote.

The Haliburton Highlands Healthy Democracy Project (HHHDP) is a homegrown initiative that Pennylegion says will educate people about the importance of civic engagement.

Lower-tier elections in Algonquin Highlands, Dysart et al, Highlands East and Minden Hills broke records for all the wrong reasons in 2022 – setting new benchmarks for acclamations and voter turnout.

Dysart et al saw 31.47 per cent of its population cast a ballot - the highest among the County's four townships. Algonquin Highlands was next at 28.9 per cent, with Minden Hills at 24.76 per cent, and Highlands East at 21.26 per cent. Countywide, the average turnout was 26.59 per cent.

Twelve politicians were given seats on council after running unopposed, including the mayor and deputy in both Dysart and Minden Hills and eight councillors – three in Highlands East, two each in Algonquin Highlands and Dysart, and one in Minden Hills.

"We need to somehow do something to motivate people to become more involved," Pennylegion said. "That last election is, by far, the least amount of participation I've seen at the local level. Which is a shame, because our closest contact with government is municipal.

"When you look out your window, most of what you see and the services we have are controlled by the municipality. People don't understand what kind of effect they can have on their future, on how their town is run just by speaking up or registering a vote," he added.

Joining Pennylegion on HHHDP's steering committee are Jessica Slade, Lauren Hunter, Barrie Martin and former Algonquin Highlands mayor and coun. Carol Moffatt.

The initiative is being run in partnership with the Haliburton County Community Cooperative and is supported by the Haliburton County Development Corporation and Telling Our Stories Speaker Series, which has contributed $5,000 to program development.

Continued **'Teaching'** on page 6

Highlander news

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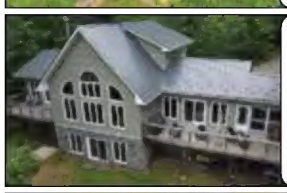

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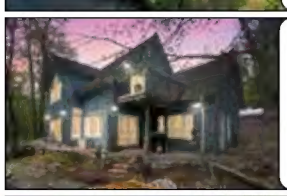

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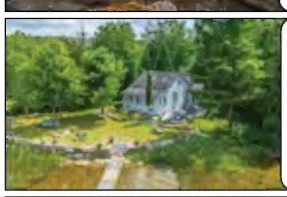

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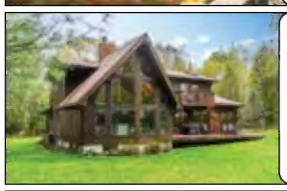

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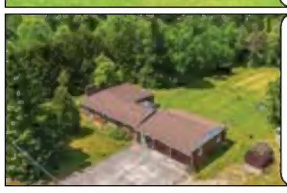

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SPECIALIZING IN WATERFRONT PROPERTIES

Minden Hills faces deluge of maintenance projects

By Lisa Gervais

Things are moving at the Minden Hills library and cultural centre – but it's not the kind of movement staff or council are embracing.

Chief building official, Eric Guay, told council Aug. 28 that the retaining wall that supports the accessibility ramp is moving away from the building.

He said they had checked six points and the wall has moved half-an-inch to three-quarters-of-an-inch in some areas.

"The frost heave that we are seeing in the wintertime is causing significant issues. As well, the posts holding up the gable entry structure have not been put below frost levels," he told council. He added when the ramp moves, the structural posts are moving with it.

He said the municipality has received some Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program funding to put towards various accessibility projects at the library and cultural centre, Lochlin Community Centre, Irondale Community Centre and Minden Curling Club. The federal government pays 40 per cent ($358,800), the province 33.33 per cent ($298,970.10) and the township 26.67 per cent ($239,229.90) for a total of $897,000. Expenses must be as of March 31, 2027.

Guay noted the township's accessibility priorities had changed since 2021 when they got the grant and they are reviewing curling club and Irondale community centre needs. The township is also looking for someone to demolish the Lochlin community centre, and replace it with a pre-fabricated structure.

"Staff intend to follow up with the grant approval authorities to discuss the potential to reallocate remaining grant funds," Guay said.

He recommended contracting Tatham Engineering to do engineering work for the accessibility ramp and retaining wall, at a cost of $20,300 plus HST; followed by using grant funding for the retaining wall and ramp.

Mayor Bob Carter asked about timelines, and Guay said engineering work first, then construction next year. "It is not an imminent danger, but it is a situation that will develop and get worse over time."

Coun. Pam Sayne supported the ask, but said there were long-standing problems with the library and cultural centre, not just the ramp and retaining wall, but roofs. She questioned the need "for a different engineer or better designs. We have other things that have been pressing much longer that require money as well."

Coun. Tammy McKelvey said they'd hired Tatham for engineering work for the curling club roof, and library and cultural centre roofs for $27,500 and were looking at another $20,300 for the retaining wall and ramp job.

The retaining wall at the Minden Hills library and cultural centre. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

"Would we not have been better to put all these together? We needed to get this a little better organized." She added there will be more work coming with staff entrances at the administration building.

She said they have to make sure the funding can go to the retaining wall and ramp project.

CAO Cynthia Fletcher agreed, "I think we need get a lot more coordinated" when it comes to facilities. However, she said they wanted to start using grant money they have received.

The County of Haliburton is looking at hiring an engineer as part of the service delivery review. Mayor Bob Carter said it could be a resource his township can use.

McKelvey and Sayne also asked about progress on the curling club, cultural centre and library roofs.

"This is an emergency, practically," Sayne said of the cultural centre roof.

Guay said Tatham was close to completing engineering work for the curling club roof "and then we'll look at the cultural centre as the next step as well." However, he pointed out this funding has to do with accessibility, not facility upgrades.

Council approved Guay's ask for using the grant money for the retaining wall and ramp.

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Highlander news

Susan Zambonin, CEO of Habitat for Humanity Peterborough & Kawartha Region, left, and Susan Tromanhauser, president of Places for People, right. *Photo by Steven Sherwood.*

Habitat and Places join up

By Lisa Gervais

On Sept. 7, representatives of Habitat for Humanity Peterborough & Kawartha Region and Places for People erected a sign just off of Peninsula Road in Haliburton announcing a partnership to build affordable condos at the site.

It's part of Paul Wilson's Harburn Holdings project, following Wilson's promise to donate some of the land for affordable housing.

The two housing providers revealed their official collaboration last week, and will hold an information session Sept. 18 for contractors, potential homeowners, renters, and the public from 3-7 p.m. at the Haliburton Legion.

Zambonin was reluctant to discuss the Peninsula Road project in detail, saying more would be revealed next week.

However, she did say, "this partnership will allow Habitat to do affordable home ownership and it will allow Places for People to do affordable rentals. It will be the first time that Habitat has worked with a non-profit to provide affordable rentals."

Zambonin added, "that's new for us. Normally, we're just trying to sell all of our units. And it doesn't help someone whose income may be a little bit lower and Places for People is only renting, so that doesn't help somebody who wants to get equity. So, this is a really good partnership in that respect."

Tromanhauser said the collaboration is ideal for Places for People. "We're excited to work with Habitat because they have so much experience in building new builds and their reputation is pristine. Working together just makes sense because we're both trying to solve the affordable housing problem; them through home ownership and us through rentals."

Zambonin said that about four or five months ago, they made a presentation to the Haliburton County Home Builders Association and said, "this is what we're planning to do. We're looking for local trades, local suppliers because we have a whole network, but it's in Peterborough and Lindsay. We've said 'sure, we can bring people here, but that's not what we want'. We're looking for new partnerships, we're looking for local suppliers." She said in Peterborough, they get cost plus a bit as it is affordable housing.

"We want to take our model and just bring it to Haliburton and make new friends, essentially."

Zambonin was asked about challenges in Haliburton County. She said she didn't think there was anything different from Lindsay or Peterborough. "There is NIMBYism (not in my backyard), 'those people' that are going to be purchasing our homes. Well, 'those people' are your neighbours that are renting, and have solid jobs, and just can't find a house they can afford that is worth buying and get a down payment."

She added, "for us, it's really trying to get people to understand how our program works. Because the average person would say 'if builders can't do this, how can you do it - that it's going to be affordable?' We have to explain our mortgage model for our homeowners; and how we are able to build for the price that we are able to build, which is our partnerships in the community. We know we are not going to get donations to build this. We need help with the cost to build and when our homeowners buy, that's how we pay for it. We don't walk away with all kinds of debt."

Tromanhauser said Places for People brings local knowledge to the partnership and "can help Susan and her team meet the right people and get the message out and explain how Habitat works, and how it's going to work in Haliburton."

The two said once the community sees how it works, they hope it can kick off other affordable housing builds, such as at the Wee Care property in Haliburton.

The event is Thursday, Sept. 18 from 3-7 p.m. at the Haliburton Legion at 719 Mountain St., Haliburton.

Highlander news

DYSART ET AL NEWS

Action on feral cats

Coun. Pat Casey, at Dysart et al's last meeting, called for action on feral cats in Haliburton.

When bylaw enforcement officer Hailey Cole was presenting her monthly report Aug. 26, Casey said he was getting some complaints about feral cats in the community "and the havoc they're causing."

He said he was aware Dysart et al has a canine control bylaw.

"I would suggest it's (feral cats) become more of an issue, fast. I think a public education program of making sure you look after your individual pet is something that we could lead with. And if it doesn't help the situation, then we have to move to putting some rules in place to look after that," the councillor said. "I hate more rules, but if people aren't going to look after their animals, then we have to jump in."

He asked Cole if it would be easy to do a public education campaign, either on their website or in the newspaper. "Just a couple of suggestions to try to absolve that problem."

Cole said they could do public education on social media or in the newspaper.

"But if it gets to the point where we're going to have to pass a bylaw regarding it, I would have to look into what that looks like. I can reach out to some of our neighbouring municipalities to see if they have anything. Regulating cats is going to be a difficult task if we decide to take it on but public education is absolutely within our scope right now."

Casey said his idea was public education first, "and if it doesn't fly, we'll have to do something about it."

Dysart et al has since put information for cat owners on its website.

Downtown lighting

Council granted RE/MAX Professionals North, Brokerage a temporary exemption under its sign bylaw.

Cole said her department had received a complaint about the businesses sign being backlit at 191 Highland St., when the township does not allow backlit signs in that part of the downtown. She said gooseneck lighting is permitted.

Owner Christopher Alexander asked council's forgiveness, saying he wants to reface the building in future, with plans to get new signs for all tenants. He added the existing sign was expensive, and he did not want to have to replace it now, and then again in 18-24 months.

Mayor Murray Fearrey said if they are replacing it anyway, why not do it now? But Alexander said they had not finalized their plans for the building's refurbishment.

"If we give you relief, how do we know you're going to do what you say you are going to do?" Fearrey added.

Alexander said they also own the Algonquin Outfitters building and they had done some "major improvements" there.

"We believe in the longevity and value of Haliburton as a town and community and are committed to continue to invest there, not just for our business, but the overall township, it improves everybody's values. We are committed and are just working through pricing with designers in town."

Council granted a timed exemption.

Sweating it out in Glebe Park

Sweat Social got the green light from council to host its third annual sweat social games in Glebe Park Sept. 28.

Owner Chelsea Adamson said her gym had hosted the last two events, but it is has outgrown the space.

Adamson said it is a fitness competition that brings together athletes of all levels. She said they'd had 16 to 76-year-olds take part. She called it a "just super high energy celebration of strength, conditioning and community spirit."

As of Aug. 26, 25 teams of two people had already registered, and she anticipated up to 96 or 100 people.

Adamson said it is the "perfect outdoor venue" for competitors and spectators. She noted people could park at Fleming College since it's a Sunday and there are no classes or events that day.

She said they'd use the field, baseball diamond, toboggan hill, and some of the walking trails, and would not damage the park, including the grass, pathways will not be impeded, and they would abide by the noise bylaw.

Tackling phragmites

Jim Prince and Andy Gordon of U-Links told council they're particularly concerned about a significant patch of phragmites in Pine Lake in West Guilford, near the municipal beach.

U-Links and lake associations did a survey of the invasive plant in the Dysart upper watershed in 2024, including all of County Road 7. It included Kennisis, Redstone, Growler and Lipsy, finding small to medium-sized stands.

However, they said the one in West Guilford is in, or near, water and, if left unattended, "could severely impact the Dysart West Guilford public beach on Pine Lake."

With no grant money this year to remove phragmites, they asked for Dysart's help via a fee for service agreement, estimating the cost will not exceed $10,000. They want to eradicate it, or at least stop the spread, in the upper watershed and near the beach. They said with Dysart staff support, U-Links could train volunteers, or students, to help with the work. Council supported a fee for service arrangement in principle.

Shady business

Council approved a number of requests for shade in the village.

The Head Lake Park fundraising committee wants to use remaining funds to purchase two shade shelters for the Head Lake Park playground. The committee would also like to fund benches and seating under and around one of the shelters.

A request was received from the Haliburton tennis and pickleball user groups to erect a permanent sun shelter at the courts. The sun shelter will be paid for with funds that the groups have raised.

The township will also remove the West Guilford Community Centre playground climber as it has been deemed unsafe. They will then start the process for budgeting in 2026 for a new small climber suitable for 18 months to five-years-old. In addition, the swings will have a surfacing of engineered wood fibres added when the new climber is installed.

Dysart et al coun. Pat Casey is concerned about feral cats in Haliburton. *File.*

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MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

• Don't miss the final week of Of *Light and Life*, a new exhibit by world renowned artist Michael Dumas. The exhibit features over 70 original works, spanning the last 70 years. Michael will be on-site in the Gallery on September 13 from 1:00 – 4:00 pm to present an Artist Talk, and sign copies of his recently published book *Algonquin Legacy - The Art of Michael Dumas*. The Artist Talk will begin at 1:30 pm. *Algonquin Legacy* is available for sale in the Gallery.

• The exhibit *Haycock: One Family's Canvas of Canada*, tells the story of how a chance meeting in 1927 between Maurice Haycock and A.Y. Jackson in Canada's Arctic led to nearly 100 years of painting for Maurice, his daughter's Kathy and Karole, and his granddaughter Erika. Join us for the opening reception on Saturday, September 20 from 1:00 – 4:00 pm.

• The Minden Hills Museum and Heritage Village and Nature's Place are open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am – 4 pm until October 11. Daily drop-in programs are offered Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 11 am.

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Take Notice that the Special Council Meeting scheduled for September 16, 2025, is **cancelled.** Items scheduled for the Special Council Meeting will instead be included in an upcoming September Regular Council meeting agenda.

Dated this 4th day of September 2025

If you have any questions, please contact:

Vicki Bull, Clerk
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September 27, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Scotch Line Landfill. Bring your sensitive documents to be safely shredded on-site — no need to remove staples. We're also collecting donations for the Minden Community Food Centre: Non-perishable food items, toiletries, and monetary donations welcome. Protect your privacy and give back to the community.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

• September 11 – Regular Council Meeting
• September 25 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

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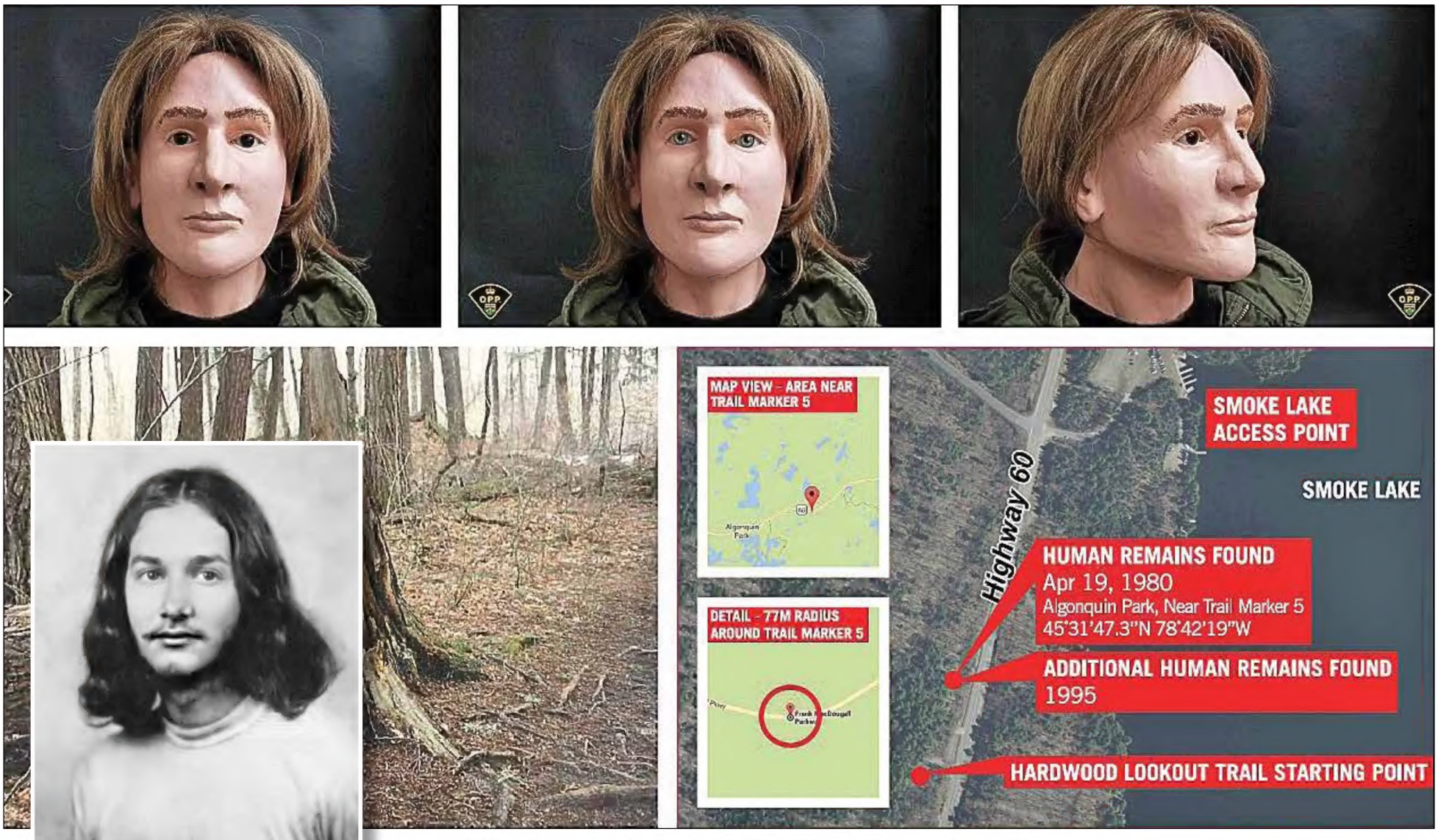
Highlander news



Above: 2017 media event poster. Inset: Eric (Ricky) Singer. *Courtesy of the OPP*

Hiker identified, laid to rest after 40 years

By Lisa Gervais

Human remains discovered in Algonquin Park in 1980 have now been identified through the use of investigative genetic genealogy (IGG).

The OPPs Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB) said on Sept. 4 that the 40-plus year case has now been solved.

On April 19, 1980, a hiker found the remains near the Hardwood Lookout Trail in the park and members of the Whitney OPP, under the OPP CIB, began an extensive search with the assistance of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Over several days, a boot, a leather wallet, clothing, a sleeping bag, camping gear and additional remains were located and examined by the Office of the Chief Coroner and the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service (OFPS).

It was determined the deceased was a white male between 18 and 21 at the time of his death. Foul play was not suspected.

It was initially estimated the male had died between July 1, 1971, and spring 1978. Further investigation narrowed the estimated time of death to approximately two years before the remains were discovered. Despite comparing the remains to several missing persons reports and issuing public appeals, the case remained unsolved.

On March 23, 1995, additional remains were discovered along the trail. A jawbone was examined by the OFPS and confirmed to belong to the human remains found in 1980. Although further searches were conducted, no additional remains or items were found.

In 2017, the OPP unveiled a three-dimensional clay facial reconstruction created by their forensic artist. This generated dozens of tips, but none led to a confirmed identity.

The investigation continued and, in April 2022, the male's DNA was submitted to the DNA Doe Project for IGG analysis in an attempt to determine his identity through family members. By September 2023, the presumptive identity was verified and used by CIB detectives to locate living family members. DNA from family members was used to confirm the male's identity and the family was notified.

After more than four decades, the deceased has finally been identified as Eric (Ricky) Singer of Cleveland, Ohio. Singer had last been seen at his parents' residence in Berea, Ohio, on Oct. 4, 1973.

The CIB said that this summer, Ricky's sisters travelled from the U.S. to walk the trail with investigators and visit the place where their brother spent his final days.

Ricky's youngest sister, Merry Singer, said, "up until this time, I never felt sad because it has been such a long time and you get numb to it. This cuts through. I'm honoured, I'm humbled, I'm grateful. He was eventually found. He was identified and we were able to put him to rest and put ourselves to rest."

It offered closure to investigators as well.

Detective sergeant Philip Holmes, OPP lead investigator, said "Eric Singer's remains were found before I was even born. The fact that I'm involved in supporting his family in understanding what happened to him feels a little surreal. This case demonstrates the incredible results that are possible when modern investigative tools, such as investigative genetic genealogy, are used to resolve historic cases and provide long-awaited answers to families. This was one of the most rewarding investigations of my career."

Highlander business

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A MESSAGE FROM

Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER of COMMERCE

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Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Haliburton Highlands Healthy Democracy Project members Sean Pennylegion, Jessica Slade, Lauren Hunter, Barrie Martin and Carol Moffatt. *Submitted.*

Teaching people how system works

Continued from page 1

Learn, meet and mingle

The group's first step has been to organize a four-part 'Voices and Votes' series that Pennylegion says will inform people about the ins and outs of municipal governance.

The first session 'partnership in action: community and council' is being held Sept. 16, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Haliburton Legion. There, Slade, who works as a civics consultant, will talk folks through how they can contribute to community development by working alongside local government.

"It will include some success stories that have happened, things that regular people have done, working alongside council, in each of our four municipalities," Pennylegion said.

The second talk will feature former MPs Barry Devolin (Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock) and Maryam Monsef (Peterborough-Kawartha) discussing why people should get involved by running for office, supporting a political campaign, or being an informed community member. It will take place Oct. 7 at the Lloyd Watson Community Centre in Wilberforce.

The final two events will take place in spring 2026 and will focus on what it's like to run for office and serve as a municipal representative, featuring stories from past politicians. There will also be details about what a successful campaign looks like – for a candidate, supporter or voter.

We all play a role

After serving 16 years on Algonquin Highlands council from 2006-2022, one term as a councillor and three as mayor, Moffatt knows what she's talking about when discussing municipal politics. She discussed being a panelist in one of the sessions with Martin and Hunter late last year, but after learning more about HHHDP decided she wanted to be more involved.

"My years on council showed me that local government is widely felt to be confusing and inaccessible to the average person. They don't know the agendas are public, that meetings as open and now streamed online, they don't know they're supposed to have a relationship with their councillors.

"This is an opportunity to teach folks how the system works so that they can participate. It has felt to me, for years, that people have things to say, ideas to share and perspectives to put forward, but they don't know what door to knock on to get there," Moffatt said.

Inspiring the next generation of leaders is just as important – almost every elected official in the Highlands is at least 40, with the average age of County council, made up of mayors and deputies from the four townships, over 65.

Moffatt admitted life in the public spotlight can be difficult – abuse is a lot more common now than 20 years ago, thanks to social media, but said she feels the good drastically outweighs the bad.

"You get to have a say in shaping the future of your community – there aren't many things [more fulfilling] than that," Moffatt said.

She and Pennylegion say HHHDP will also talk about the importance of volunteering – whether with a municipal committee or event, or another community organization. In recent years, groups like Haliburton Highlands Health Services, area food banks, churches and legions, Pride in the Highlands and more have seen a marked drop-off in volunteer numbers.

"One of the things that needs to be brought to the fore is that when you have a lot of volunteer-run organizations that have come to provide anchor services in a community, and they're run by people who are getting older; and you have a younger cohort that is disengaged and perhaps not overly interested, then the burden to continue to provide those services will fall to a municipality," Moffatt said. "Then taxes go up and people get angry.

"We're getting close to a breaking point here… we need to find ways to connect with people so they know they are needed, they do play a role in helping make our community run," she added.

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COUNTY OF HALIBURTON NEWS

Two doctors and one nurse practitioner coming

Two family physicians and one nurse practitioner will be joining the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Organization over the next few months.

At a County council meeting Sept. 10, physician recruitment coordinator Wendy Welch said Dr. Mario Lupu is a family doctor starting Sept. 18.

She said he would replace Dr. Norm Bottum when he retires at the end of the month, taking on Bottum's 1,287 patients.

Dr. Carly Eisbrenner is a family doctor who has signed on for the organization, and Haliburton Highlands Health Services. She's expected to start Nov. 1, taking on 700 new patients.

And, Cicily Cooper is the nurse practitioner. She has made a commitment to the organization for part-time work, also starting Nov. 1. Welch said Copper is expected to see between 480 and 640 County patients.

Welch added Dr. Lupu has signed on for four years; Dr. Eisbrenner for six years, and Cooper for two.

As the County incentivizes doctors, the cost is $258,000 over six years.

Welch said staff had recruited four full-time physicians and one nurse practitioner in 2025.

She added, it's estimated that approximately 9,000 Haliburton County residents do not have a local family physician. The current waitlist at the organization is 1,600.

Welch added there are nine family physicians currently practicing primary care in the clinic, but in talking with their team, "they have indicated there is a need for five additional family physicians and two to three nurse practitioners to bring their staffing level to a full compliment."

She added the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team does not currently have funding independently for more nurse practitioners.

They anticipate having to hire for retirements within the next couple of years.

"Also, with approval of local expansion funding, there may be an influx of nurse practitioners and physicians into the Minden Health Hub, Coboconk and Woodville," she said.

Ambulance delays pressures service

With it taking one to two years to receive new ambulances from the time of ordering them, Haliburton County Paramedic Service director Michael Slatter said it is putting pressure on the existing fleet.

He called on council Aug. 27 to approve moving nearly $276,000 from the ambulance capital reserve for the purchase of one bus which was expected to be delivered in August.

The County ordered two new ambulances in 2024 – one to be delivered around this time, and the second in early 2026.

Slatter said they need to be replaced every 60-72 months, or at 300,000 kilometres. That means a replacement ambulance every year, and two every sixth year.

He said the new ones will replace a 2019 and 2020 model.

However, he told council "the supply chain has affected our receipt of ambulances with expected delivery of 16-18 months.

This extensive delay that we are experiencing along with increased call volumes are seeing the kilometres driven on ambulances far exceeding 300,000 km.

"We currently have three ambulances that are over 320,000 kms for which we are experiencing increased maintenance costs due to repairs. This leads to increased out-of-service times for these vehicles which impacts the ability to rotate the fleet, driving the mileage up prematurely on newer vehicles."

Slatter added, "Based on this, we anticipate the need to order another vehicle for potential delivery in 2026 and two to three vehicles for 2027."

(County of Haliburton news compiled by Lisa Gervais)

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Editorial opinion

TheHighlander
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To report on issues, people and events important to the community.

To reflect and promote pride in the culture, people and landscape of The Highlands.

To encourage Highlanders to believe in themselves, in our community, and in their power to make our place in the world better every day.

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Turning things around

By Mike Baker

With a municipal election a little over 13 months away, now is the time for prospective politicians to start planning their run.

This is one of many messages the recently-launched Haliburton Highlands Healthy Democracy Project (HHHDP) will be driving home over the next several months. The group, part of the Haliburton County Community Cooperative, is made up of five local residents who want to inspire change at the local level.

What that change looks like is probably different from what you're thinking – they're not taking aim at a recent policy amendment or council decision/position, as many start-ups have done on issues around septic inspections, short-term rentals, and land ownership. Instead, they're attempting to flip the script and change the narrative over what life in the public eye is all about.

Next week, on Sept. 16, one of the HHHDP members, Jessica Slade, will be at the Haliburton Legion to explain the role of a municipality and the impact local decisions have on our lives. News flash – it's pretty significant.

It's always puzzled me how voter turnout for municipal elections is much lower than federal and provincial polls. It should be said, this is pretty much the case for every township in the country.

Still, I cringe when reflecting on the local results from 2022. Of the four lower-tier municipalities in Haliburton County, Dysart et al reported the highest turnout at 31.47 per cent. That means more than two thirds of the population felt it wasn't worth their time registering a vote.

It was even worse elsewhere – in Algonquin Highlands participation was pegged at 28.9 per cent. It was 24.76 per cent in Minden Hills and 21.26 per cent in Highlands East.

No doubt, that pitiful response can be partly attributed to the number of acclamations we had. Dysart and Minden Hills had its mayor and deputy decided for them, on account that Murray Fearrey, Walt McKechnie, Bob Carter and Lisa Schell had no competition for their roles.

Eight councillors were also awarded free rides – three in Highlands East, two each in Algonquin Highlands and Dysart, and one in Minden.

While I don't agree, I do understand why folks will have felt like their vote was pointless last time out. For the most part, the future direction of all councils was decided long before voting day.

That's why it's imperative we all do our part now to ensure we're not left in a similar position next year. Bottom line, more people need to put their name forward.

Some townships have taken steps over the last year or so to try and encourage that. In February, Dysart council opted to increase the pay for the mayor position 24.15 per cent, deputy mayor by 16.39 per cent and councillor by 10.85 per cent. Highlands East also upped its rates for elected officials this year.

At the County level, remuneration for the warden role was upped almost $11,000, deputy warden increased $4,400 and councillors just over $4,000. With an average age north of 65, council hopes the hike will encourage more people to put their name forward for leadership positions in their home township.

It's a demanding role sitting on council, no doubt about it. But it's also a wonderful opportunity to help shape the future of your community.

Do you care about snow removal? Road maintenance? Programming at your local arena? How about the library? Or your favourite playground or public park? All of those are run at the local level by our municipalities.

For the few continuing to feign disinterest, you care about the money in your wallet, right? Because, aside from income tax, property taxes are likely to be one of your biggest annual expenses. Well, those rates are set by your local council.

HHHDP has committed to four information sessions between now and spring 2026 – the folks involved can show you the path to improved civic participation. We sincerely hope people care enough about their communities, their friends and family, and themselves to attend.

HUMANS OF HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS

From the Isle to the forest

by Susan Tromanhauser

A world away from the small gardens of Ireland, Stephen Byrne spent his Saturday morning "getting lost in the forest." While he knew exactly where he was, the chore of preparing fire wood for winter became an escape to the beauty and quiet of Haliburton.

Byrne and his wife arrived in Canada in 2012 thinking they would stay a year or two. "We had a home in Ireland, but why not try something different? A bit of adventure before we got gray," he recalls.

"Prior to 2021, we used our holidays to see the world—Australia, across Europe. We even went to New York, though it was far too noisy for us. But when we visited Niagara Falls and crossed the border, we noticed the pulse there (in Canada)—it reminded us of Ireland." His wife, a business consultant, pointed out Toronto across the way. A few years later, Toronto become home.

In 2020, came the arrival of their third son and COVID lockdowns. Needing an escape, cottaging was suggested. Not even knowing the meaning of the word cottaging, they quickly embraced the lifestyle; but packing each weekend and facing traffic did not interest them.

In January, 2022 the passing of Byrne's father reinforced "life is for the living." The Byrne family began their search for a permanent home in cottage country. After viewing many locations, the villages of Minden and Haliburton lured them north and property between the two villages became home.

Four summers later, the family has firmly rooted themselves in Haliburton. Here, the family discovered the rhythm of Canadian life: evenings by the lake roasting S'mores, neighbours stopping to chat while raking leaves, and children riding bikes freely. "Our 12-year-old can hop on his bike and meet friends at the lake, that kind of freedom wouldn't have been possible in Toronto, never mind back in Ireland," the father said.

Byrne's work at TD Bank made the move possible, thanks to remote technology. "My boss has me eight hours a day, Monday to Friday. Technology is brilliant for work; though social media I could do without. Still, it allows me to be here and prosper."

The family has embraced the community. Byrne's wife recently joined a choir and their eldest son participated in The Highlands Summer Festival, becoming a local celebrity. Byrne recalls a trip into town to pick up pizza and his son being

Stephen Byrne. *Photo by Susan Tromanhauser*

recognized for his role in *Urinetown*. The two eldest boys played in Tim Horton's soccer league although Byrne still refers to the game by the European term of football. They miss some aspects of Ireland—walking down any street and knowing people who know you and your family. Byrne also misses the wider variety of restaurants Toronto offers – especially Greek food, but there's no draw to go back permanently. "Here, it's a different way of life. More thoughtful, more considerate."

For a family that once thought Canada would be a brief adventure, Haliburton became not just a stop along the way, but home.

Editorial opinion

PHOTOS OF THE WEEK

Barbara Szita-Knight took this photo at the cottage on Farquhar Lake.

LETTERS

More research needed on feral cats

Dear editor,

I read with disappointment and concern the article in the Sept. 2 *Haliburton Echo* regarding the alleged feral cat problem in Dysart et al and the suggestion that Dysart might consider a bylaw requiring domestic cats to be kept indoors.

If the issue is primarily a growing feral cat population, there was no evidence or statistics presented to point to domestic cats as large contributors.

Animal Alliance of Canada founding director, Liz White is correct in her statement that spay-neuter programs are the answer and, yes, I am a domestic cat owner. My cat came from a feral colony on Trapper's Trail. She was one of 17 feral cats trapped and taken to a vet in Bracebridge who offered a reduced cost for the neuter and spay of each one. Every domestic cat I know has been neutered or spayed. I would hope that Dysart speak with Haliburton Veterinary Services and ask how many of the domestic cats in their practice have not been neutered or spayed. Perhaps Dysart might consider subsidizing these clinics once a year?

I do not, however, agree with Ms. White when she states that cats are domestic and not wild. Cats survive in colonies because they are wild by nature, and a domestic cat dumped anywhere in Haliburton will be an opportunistic hunter to survive. If it is cruel to let cats roam outside, how is it not cruel to feed a feral colony which only exacerbates the problem?

I would also suggest that before considering a bylaw, the township speak to Don Kerr of Minden Cat Angels. Mr. Kerr neuters, spays and rehouses feral cats.

According to the article, Coun. Pat Casey did not provide examples of complaints. Dysart council needs to do a little more research into the issue and formulate a solution that addresses the real cause, feral cat colonies.

Dagmar Boettcher
Haliburton

Why we need Pride

Dear editor,

Re: 'Why we need pride' editorial in *The Highlander* Aug. 28. After 78 years, I don't have a lot of faith in people, because under the surface there is a nasty undercurrent of which this is only one small example.

In the early days, I used to fly American, Canadian and provincial flags with a Pride flag in June. After (U.S. President Donald) Trump got in the first time, I ditched the American flag.

I then decided on Ukrainian, Canadian and provincial with the Pride flag in June. After this letter came in, I decided to leave the Pride flag up year-round. End of story. This is only the tip of the iceberg as to the way a lot of people really feel.

Keith Stata
Kinmount

Brad King took this shot of a Bald Eagle branching out.

Highlander arts

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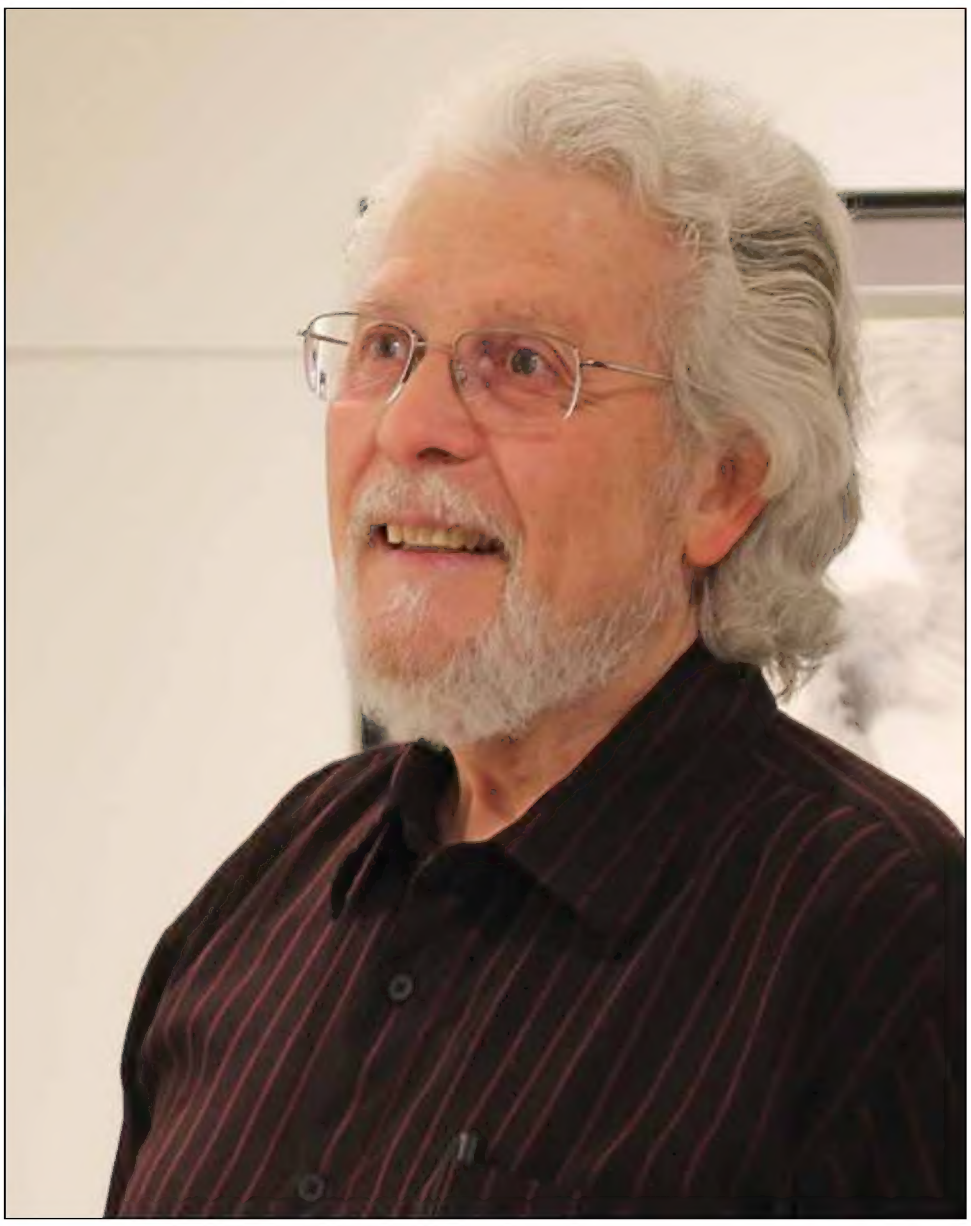

Last week of Light and Life

It's the final week of 'Of Light and Life,' an exhibit by world-renowned artist Michael Dumas. The exhibit features an extensive collection of 76 works, from preliminary sketches and studies, to completed studio drawings and paintings. It's at the Agnes Jamieson Gallery. Dumas will be onsite this coming Saturday from 1-4 p.m. The artist talk will take place at 1:30 p.m., followed by a book signing of his new book *Algonquin Legacy: the art of Michael Dumas.* Dumas says the work embodies John Ruskin's philosophy of "feel strongly, think strongly, and see truly." In his own words, he says "as for life, it is my life that I speak of, the direct experiences of places and things on a personal level. Inspiration found in this way comes with an essential need to seek a way to also create a sense of life and depth on a two-dimensional surface. It is sometimes achieved with colour and often without. It becomes as much of an emotional process as it is one of acquired knowledge of the physical attributes of paint, pencil, paper, canvas, or panel. In any case, technique has become intuitive, even as emotion and 'seeing truly' guide the hand from start to finish. (Lisa Gervais)

Above: Michael Dumas will do an artist talk at the gallery Saturday.
Photo by Lisa Gervais.

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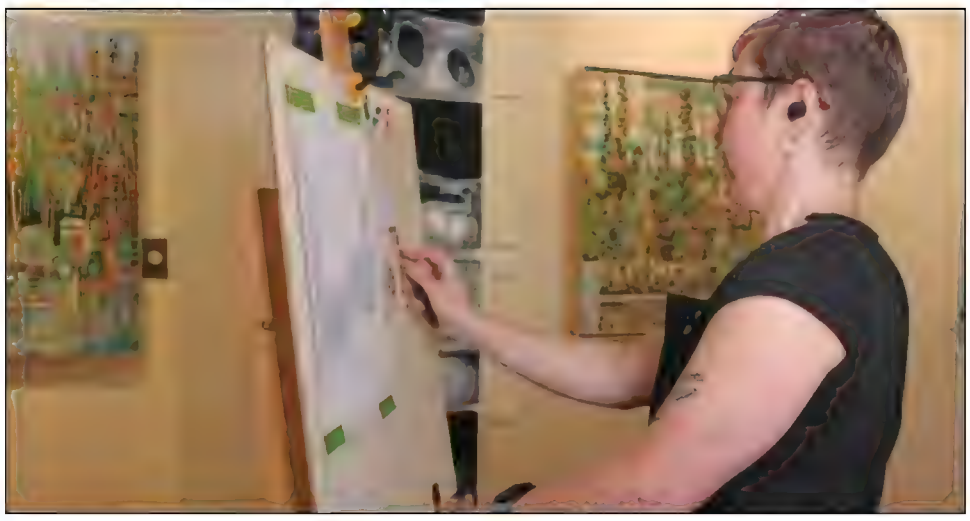
Highlander arts



Top: Corner Gallery curator David Partridge unveils the image. Bottom: Zoey Zoric gets down to work. *Photos by Lisa Gervais.*

All is revealed

By Lisa Gervais

You could have cut the tension with a palette knife as four artists took part in Corner Gallery's Reveal 2 Sept. 6.

Actually, it wasn't very tense at all as curator David Partridge revealed a black and white image and the artists went to work in their separate corners creating their own interpretations of the mystery photo.

While a reporter would also like to work in that it was like watching paint dry – it was anything but.

Members of the public dropped in and out of the gallery to watch the process unfold. One sauntered over to Harvey Walker with a casual "how are you?" to be told "I'm having fun. I have a paintbrush in my hand. It's my happy place."

Walker, David Rolfe, Kelly Whyte and Zoey Zoric all accepted the challenge of taking part in the activity. The first Reveal featured Marissa Sweet, Holly Hutchison, James Brown and Barbara Hart on Aug. 9.

Partridge had heard about similar events but found them more competitive. He wanted the artists to use their own styles, with no limitations. The first time around, he provided the twist of a black and white photo, and did so again for Reveal 2.

"They have to paint in colour and they are not allowed to look at each other's works. So, they all come out very different. I think that's cool." He added if people looked at the image closer, it was interesting when placed upside down. One of the artists did the flip.

Partridge added it wasn't easy finding images because he didn't want the paintings to be boring.

Joan Hawley and Alex Isbister came to watch. Hawley said it was slow when the artists were just starting, "but once they get going, they get the idea, then they just seem to take off." She finds it interesting how each artist approaches the process differently.

Isbister said he doesn't care much about art when it is on the wall, "but I care a lot about the moment of production. I care a lot about the courage, the creativity…"

Whyte had never done anything like this before and was excited. She brought a lot of art supplies in preparation. She shared she was thinking of scrapping the Muskoka chairs on a dock in the image, but instead making leaves on the trees the focus and going with an Autumn theme. She also planned to spend time on reflections in the water. "We'll see as we go along what happens. It may change, you just never know."

Partridge said the Reveal series is going well. He got emails after the first one with people saying, "it was so cool to see the process. I know for artists, sometimes you do something like this and all it is are other artists coming to learn … but we're seeing genuine curiousity from the public."

He's thinking of now doing a quarterly Reveal, with another one in the new year. He has lots of ideas. "Next time, it might be I'm going to show them the image for a half-a-second and say 'go for it'." He added there could be other media. For example, George Hall, a stone carver, has already signed up for the next one.

Highlander community

ADVERTORIAL

How shrubs create living landscapes

Shrubs are the middle child of the plant world: not as big and mature as trees and not as fun and agile as perennials. But we'd be nowhere without them. So today it's time to sing their praises and prove they can solve problems, provide ecological value, and look great doing it.

Right now I'm working on a very shrubby project that I'll be installing in the spring. I'm removing a bunch of maple and sumac suckers on a southeast facing slope and replacing them with more than 90 shrubs and then a whole slew of perennials. It's going to be fantastic.

By Simon Payn

Layers within layers

I like to plant in layers, and shrubs form part of the structural layer. But shrubs can also be layered within themselves. For example, this design will have Bush Honeysuckle as the matrix layer weaving through the planting. This is a super-versatile plant with attractive yellow flowers that grows about three feet tall. Its fibrous roots, like most of the shrubs I'm using, will help stabilize the slope.

I'll place one Serviceberry specimen, spiking tall next to the top layer. I'll be planting it off-centre so as not to hide views, but it will provide a tree-like element to the design because I'll be ordering a plant in tree form rather than a multi-stemmed shrub.

The rich and delicious middle layer will include Grey Dogwood, which will form screening thickets, Ninebark for some chunky structure, Highbush Cranberry for its distinctive leaves, along with Bayberry and Smooth Rose. The varied, layered picture this creates is striking.

Seasons of colour

Most shrubs and trees flower in spring. Serviceberry and Highbush Cranberry will be there with their white flowers, followed by white and pink of Ninebark and then more white from the Dogwood. That's not forgetting the pink of the roses as summer begins.

Then in fall, the leaves of the Serviceberry are orange and red, the Cranberry and Dogwood also show red and maybe some purple, and the many colours of the Black Chokeberry, which is also part of the design. That's not to mention the berries many of these shrubs offer.

Ecosystem engineers

We're leaving as many perennials as we can, and we will supplement with plants, such as sedges and Wild Strawberry, that help stabilize the slope.

Then there'll be a succession of perennial blooms, from violets in the spring to Lanceleaf Coreopsis for summer, then asters and goldenrods in fall.

As Michael Guidi and Kevin Philip Williams write in their beautiful book, *Shrouded in Light*, one of the wonderful things about shrubs is that they function as ecosystem engineers, modifying environmental conditions and creating beneficial microclimates for other plants.

This site won't be static. The perennials will be more prominent while the shrubs establish, then over time the shrubs will fill in, forcing some of our perennials out but providing the right conditions for other plants to find a home and grow.

I often view the kind of work I do as managing ecological succession. Sometimes I allow it to take place but at other times I hold it back. Shrubs are the quintessential early succession plant, holding space while trees go from seedling to sapling. Sometimes they give way as they get shaded out, or perhaps allow less sun-loving shrubs to take their place under the canopy. And all the time they're vital food and habitat for birds, insects, and mammals.

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grounded GARDENING FOR LIFE

Barb Smith Morrison, executive director of Brooksong, with musician Chris Smith at Haliburton Highlands Brewing Sept. 6. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

That's a wrap

By Lisa Gervais

Brooksong Retreat and Cancer Support Centre wrapped up its sixth annual Haliburton Highlands Challenge with a celebration at Haliburton Highlands Brewing Sept. 6.

Executive director Barb Smith-Morrison said they had raised more than $100,000 over the summer, which she called a "wonderful accomplishment."

She dubbed it a peer-to-peer fundraiser. "It's actually people who have come to a program; people who have come to a retreat, board members, many volunteers who have gone out and chosen a way to get moving in their community and then invited others to donate to support the work we do."

Smith-Morrison said they had more than 200 people on their waitlist for a cancer support retreat.

She added they were one-of-a kind in Canada; "people are really getting to know the work that we do." She noted they offer the retreats at no cost to participants "because when you are in the midst of a cancer experience, we know that we need to make sure the kind of support we offer is really accessible to you."

The executive director added when people arrive, they are well cared for, build community with other people living with cancer, offered evidence-base practices that help with stress, PTSD, anxiety, body pain, difficulty sleeping … "wellness practices that you can take into your life." She said they also invite the caregiver, or key support person, to lend support to them.

Smith-Morrison said one of the special things about this summer has been the way the local community "has come shoulder to shoulder" with us. She noted a number of people living locally with cancer had reached out to them. There were two corporate challenge teams, Hudson Henderson Insurance and Willow Organics. There were Brooksong days; at Glecoff's Family Store, Hook, Line and Sinker, Sweat Social, the Bonnie View Inn, and an upcoming one at Heat-Line. She said it's gifted Brooksong community awareness and support.

The total was $102,820, with people still able to donate until the end of the month. Smith-Morrison said that would move "a number of people" off their waitlist; enfold more locals living with cancer in a 'warm hug from the Highlands' quilt; and continue to build support and community.

"Our hope is that we continue to grow and fill such an important gap in cancer care."

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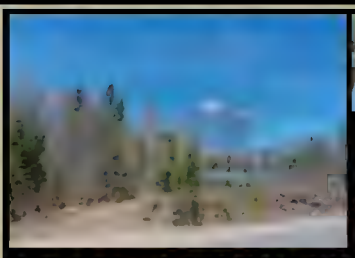

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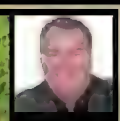

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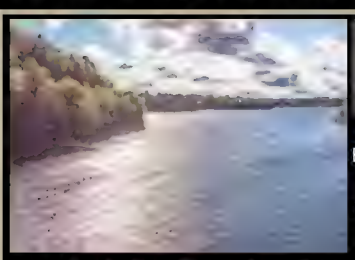

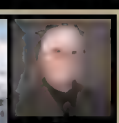

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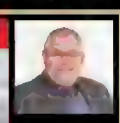

Andrew Hodgson** (705) 854-0130

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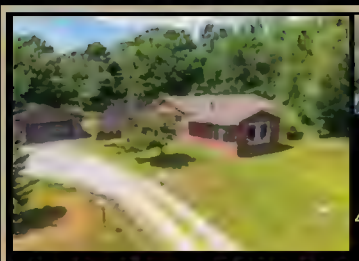
- Trails, Wetlands & Wildlife Views
- Highway Frontage + Crown Land

Susanne James* & Andy Mosher** (705) 457-2128 ext. 133

Haliburton Cottage $329,900
- 3 Beds/1 Bath, 654SqFt, 1.15 Acres
- Public Access to Miskwabi Lake Nearby
- Spacious Guest Cabin, Year Round Road



Kathy Martin* (705) 457-7592

Minden Home $695,000
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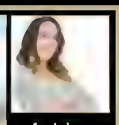

Ashley McKeigue* (705) 854-1833

Business On Hwy 118 $799,999
- 18-Acre Property, Custom-Built in 2022
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- 3 Cozy Bunkies for Guests or Storage

Brandon Nimigon*** (705) 457-8631

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- Multiple Businesses Renting, $399,000

Karen Nimigon** (705) 457-6505

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Kelly Kay* (705) 457-6841
Kirsten Rae* (705) 854-1454

Haliburton Lake $699,999
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- Southern Exp, Lakeside Firepit, Level Lot

Darlene Reil* (705) 854-2055

Wilberforce Home $189,000
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- Across The Road From Wilbermere Lake

Christine Sharp* (416) 566-1592

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- 8+ acres of private woods, cozy porch
- Close to Tory Hill & trails

Greg Stamp* (705) 455-2231

Wigamog Road $659,000
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Melanie Vigrass* (705) 754-5494

Redner Road $635,000
- Beautiful Open Concept Home
- 2 Bdrm+Den, 2 Stunning Renovated Baths
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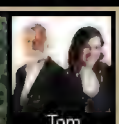

Tom Wilkinson** (705) 457-6839
Lindsay Wilkinson* (705) 854-1454

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Highlander sports

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills has received applications to consider by-laws to stop up, close, and convey those parcels of land, being shoreline road allowances, more particularly described as follows:

1. **File No. PLSRA2024075:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Howland Lake, lying in front of 5373 County Road 121, located within Part Lot 14, Concession A, Geographic Township of Lutterworth
2. **File No. PLSRA2025016:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Mountain Lake, lying in front of 1058 Mountain View Road, located within Part Lot 7, Concession 8, Geographic Township of Minden
3. **File No. PLSRA2025047:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Twelve Mile Lake, lying in front of 1908 Twelve Mile Lake Road, located within Part Lot 9, Concession 11 & 12, Geographic Township of Minden
4. **File No. PLSRA2025066:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Salerno Lake, lying in front of 1155 Hancock Road, located within Part Lot 30, Concession 4, Geographic Township of Snowdon

The above noted applications are available for inspection in the Planning Department located at 7 Milne Street, Minden, Ontario by appointment only. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the undersigned.

AND TAKE NOTICE should you wish to provide comments with respect to the above referenced applications, please submit in writing those comments to the undersigned not later than end of day on **October 3, 2025**.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE any person who claims that their land will be prejudicially affected is asked to contact the undersigned not later than October 3, 2025.

AND TAKE FURTHER NOTICE if deemed advisable, By-laws giving effect to the proposed closures and conveyances will be passed by the Council for the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills. Please note that a Council meeting to consider By-laws for the above referenced applications will be scheduled at a later date following the requiste commenting period.

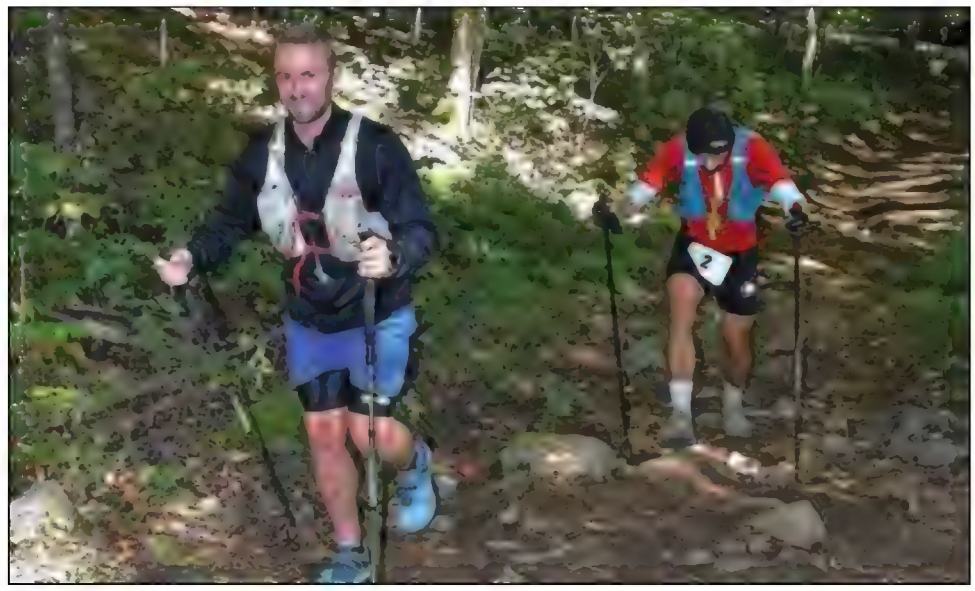
Donna Sisson
Clerical Assistant, Building, By-Law and Planning
Township of Minden Hills
705-286-1260 Ext. 509
dsisson@mindenhills.ca

PLSRA2024075

PLSRA2025016

PLSRA2025047

PLSRA2025066



Top: Agnes Jung, left, Julie Glandfield, centre, and Jaimie Marcellus; volunteers at an aid station, holding jars of pickles and pickle juice. Competitors were drinking pickle juice in order to replenish electrolytes in their bodies. Bottom: The Hattfield brothers, Curtis and Justin, on the trail. Curtis joined Justin on the last leg to help support him to the finish line. *Photos by Steven Sherwood.*

A surprise party for 650 people

By Lisa Gervais

Tegan Legge, general manager of tourism and recreation at Haliburton Forest, said they got a call from Prime Minister Mark Carney's people about two weeks before the Haliburton Trail Race – saying Carney and his wife, Diana Fox-Carney, wanted to compete in the 26km race, Sept 6.

However, she said the planning didn't take a lot of Forest time. She said his detail came for a couple of visits to check out the trails. She toured them around, showing them the aid stations.

"And that was it. They were very non-invasive. They wanted him to just be able to go out and be Mark Carney (and Diana Fox-Carney), not the prime minister that day."

One of the Forest team members was on hand to make sure the Carneys knew where they were going, otherwise, she said without the black Suburban's being everywhere, nobody would have had a clue.

Legge said it was "incredible, super slick." She said she was giving her briefing to 120 runners, knowing he was coming, but nobody else did. About half way through, people started noticing the Carneys were there and stated taking selfies with him. "But everybody was respectful. Nobody stopped anything. And they all hit the trail.

"It was like planning a surprise party, but for 650 people."

Legge has been co-organizing the 30-year-old-plus race with Cameron Ferguson for about five years, but she said this one was the most memorable for her.

"For multiple reasons. It's great the prime minister was there, but it's the largest one we've ever had. We were sold out at 650 runners. The most we've ever had is 600. Pre-us taking it over, they might get 350-400 so it's pretty incredible."

She said the weather was ideal for running. For the 100-milers, they typically see 15-20 of 50 finish. This year, they had 35-40 finishers out of 80.

Legge added in previous years, there were hardly any Haliburton County racers, "but in the last two or three years, a lot of locals are coming out to support the event, which is nice."

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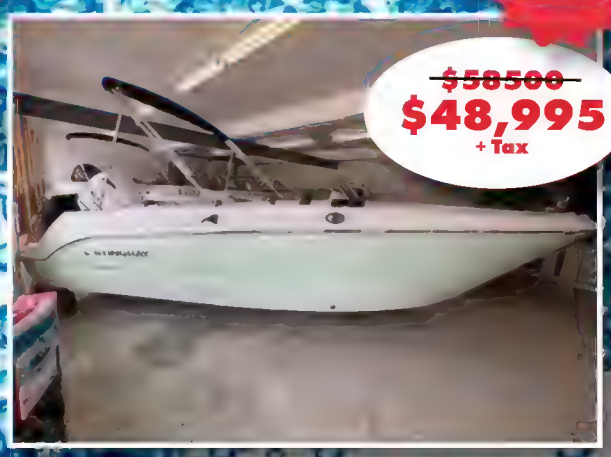

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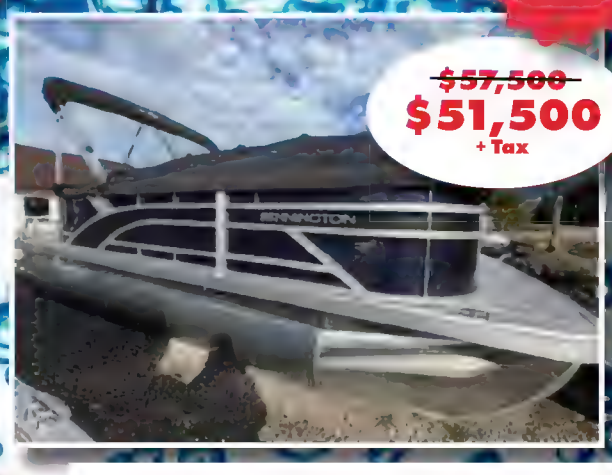
+ Tax

Stingray 172 DC (2005)

Yamaha F90, Double Bubble windscreens, Ski Bar, Bimini Top, Tonneau + Bow Cover

Save $6000



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Bennington 20SL (2025)

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Alumacraft Competitor 165

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Bennington 21 Stern Fish (2025)

Yamaha F90, Stern Fishing Seats Livewell Fishfinder, 10' Bimini top, Mooring Cover, Table, Stereo

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Monterey M205 (2024)

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Husky Cristian Giancola eludes back checker Carson Durnin of Cobourg. *Photo by Steven Sherwood.*

Huskies win season-opener

By Lisa Gervais

Specialty teams proved the difference as the Haliburton County Huskies bit the Cobourg Cougars 4-3 in their season opener Sept. 6 in Minden – sending 465 fans home happy.

It was a tight 2-2 game into the middle of the third period. However, Cobourg's Lincoln Edwards took back-to-back penalties; one at 10:42 for hooking, and another at 15:03 for tripping.

The Huskies powerplay went to work: Alex Rossi scored at 11:51 to give the Huskies a 3-2 lead, with assists to Oliver Tang and Cristian Giancola. Then, Giancola bulged the twine at 16:31, from Carter Petrie and Connor Hollebek (his third helper of the game) to put the home team over the edge.

A Cobourg marker at 19:29 with an extra attacker on the ice made it look close on the scoreboard. The Huskies penalty killers also held Cobourg at bay for six minutes of the game.

Coach Jordan Bailey said "specialty teams were huge. Any time you can score two powerplay goals and not get scored against on a PK, it's going to give you a really good chance to win."

It was Petrie who scored the first goal of the season for the blue and white, at 7:46 of the first, from Hollebek and Curtis Allen.

Cobourg answered at 1:50 of the second, as Wyatt Gregory found the back of the net behind Stephen Totl.

Daniel Vasic gave the Huskies the lead back when he scored at 8:09, from Rossi and Hollebek going into the second intermission.

Early in the third, Cobourg tied it at twos, on an Edwards goal at 1:10 before his two trips to the sin bin that potentially cost his team the game.

Totl was solid between the pipes, turning aside 22 of 25 shots.

Bailey said, "I thought for the most part, with a new group and a lot of new players, we did well. I think there's always things to work on early in the season, especially with a younger team, but I thought we did what we had to do to win a hockey game which was the big thing."

In preparing for North York Sept. 13, Bailey said they are a young team, too, so "focus on our systems and what we need to do."

Next up: The Huskies host the North York Rangers Sept. 13 at S.G Nesbitt Memorial Arena. Puck drop is slated for 4 p.m.

Kate Hilton and Elizabeth Renzetti. *Photo by Betsy Hilton/Transatlantic Agency.*

Sisters in crime coming to Minden

By Lisa Gervais

Authors Kate Hilton and Elizabeth Renzetti say it's a no brainer coming to talk about their Quill and Packet cozy mystery series in a place like Minden Hills.

Blue Heron Books and The Arts Council – Haliburton Highlands is presenting Books & Bites: Cottage Mysteries with Hilton and Renzetti at the Dominion Hotel in Minden Sept. 14.

"It was important to us to do some events in that part of the province because I think that's what we're imagining when we write the books and we really hope that the people who live in that part of the province feel like we do it justice."

The two have co-authored *Widows and Orphans* and *Bury the Lead*, and are in the midst of editing their third book, *Put it to Bed*.

Asked why the series is resonating with readers, Renzetti said partially that it's funny, warm-hearted, and the main character is relatable.

"She's definitely not perfect." She added the world is chaotic and a giant mess "and I think people are looking to … reconnect with this basic idea of community and goodness, and people searching for truth, which is what Cat does."

The main character is small-town journalist Cat Conway – a middle-aged woman who is divorced, struggling with her kid, and own mother, and in the aftermath of a career that had a lot of promise but she's not where she wants to be now. She investigates high-profile death in the cozy murder mystery series.

Quill and Packet is taken from *The Orillia Packet and Times* newspaper name. It is based in the fictional town of Port Ellis. Renzetti is a journalist, so draws on that experience in the writing. Hilton is a writer and a psychotherapist.

Hilton said she has a "deep and abiding interest in what makes people tick and I hope that shows up in the characters on the page. That's what I think I bring to it; a lot of thought about why people are the way they are, and do the things they do, and trying to bring a lot of empathy even to characters who are comic figures, or more villainous."

She also likes to see how Cat struggles but grows.

Renzetti notes the character is a crusader in a time of a "crisis of lying."

Asked about the collaborative process, Renzetti said because they are now editing, they are texting and talking a lot. When it comes to the genesis of a book, Hilton said they are usually fairly united on themes. They spend a lot of time together on outlines. Then they work more independently, often alternating writing chapters.

Renzetti said they share similar senses of humour and political sensibilities. "If we can nail Cat's voice, then we're off to the races." When they have differing opinions about other characters, settings and plots, she said they talk it out. She said there is less ego, and writing as two can bring less pressure. There is a high degree of trust to make the writing seamless.

As for coming to the Highlands, Hilton said she went to Camp Gay Venture, a girls' summer camp in the Haliburton Highlands, near Lochlin, for years. She knows of the Molou theatre. Renzetti has been to the region.

Hilton said she has learned to write faster, and Renzetti to relinquish some control.

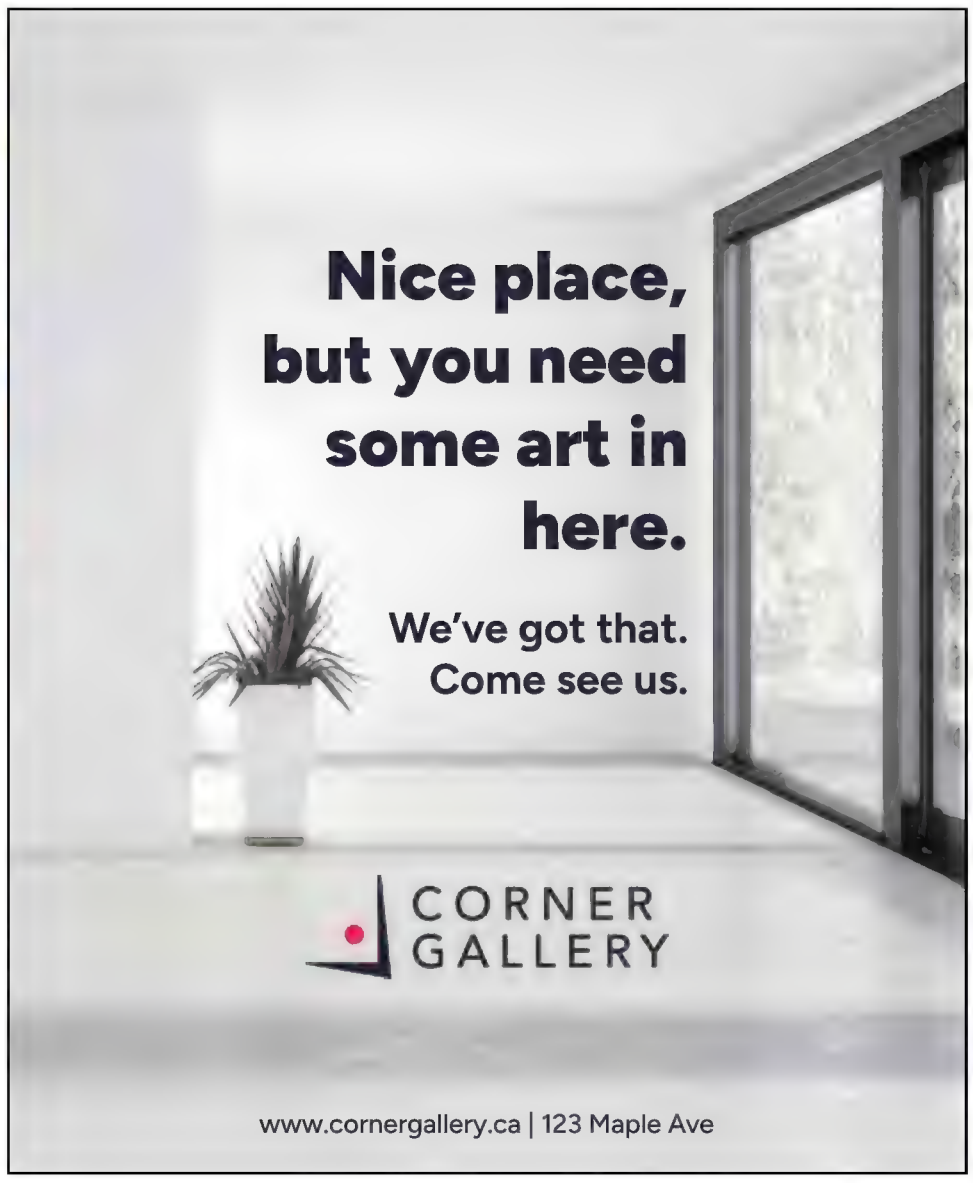
The two said it's a joyful collaboration.

"It really is so much fun to do," Hilton said. "An unexpected gift, really," adds Renzetti, finishing her writing partner's sentence.

Fundraiser

Mysteries in Cottage Country is an Arts Council literary fundraiser. It is at 1 p.m. Local editor Emily Stonehouse will interview the authors, followed by audience questions. There will also be a chance to chat during book signings.

Tickets are $60 and include a selection of sweet treats, coffee or tea, a donation to the Arts Council and a choice of either of the two cozy mystery books. Online tickets are available through the Blue Heron Books website https://blueheronbooks.com/events/3194220250914



What's on

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Office open 9 a.m. to noon, clubroom closed.
Tuesdays: Games and cards night starting at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome. Fun darts at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid euchre 1 p.m. start, Remembrance Hall. Bingo, doors open at 5 p.m. with a 7 p.m. start time, Remembrance Hall. There will be a $1,000 jackpot Aug. 6, Sept. 3, and Oct. 1. Snack bar available from 5:30 p.m. – French fries and hot dogs available while supplies last.
Thursdays: General meeting third Thursday of the month.
Fridays: meat draw, five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m., tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts 4:30 p.m. onwards. 50/50 draw at 5 p.m., tickets are $1 and available in the clubroom. Beginning July 4, board games for seniors from 10 a.m. to noon.
Saturdays: Open only for special events
Clubroom hours: Monday 3-9 p.m., Tues 5-9 p.m., Wed/Thurs 3-6 p.m., Fri 3-7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday closed.
Upcoming events: Drum circle Sept. 7, Oct. 5, Nov. 16, Dec. 7, Jan. 4, with a 1 p.m. start time.

Royal Canadian Legion - Mabel D. Brannigan Branch 636 Minden

Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Monday to Thursday** with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' Tuesday.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner 4-7 p.m.
Saturday all day breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with meat draws at 11 a.m.

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Weekly activities:
Karaoke: call for dates
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week.
Monday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1-3 p.m., Darts 7-9 p.m. and euchre 7-9 p.m.

Wilberforce Legion Branch 624

Sept. 23 Veterans appreciation dinner. Tickets are $20 each. Veterans and their spouse get in for free. Cocktails at 5 p.m. Dinner to follow.
Wednesdays cribbage league 6:30 p.m. – sign up at the Legion
Thursdays, Sept. 11 and 25 HHHS Social Rec 10 a.m.
Fridays, Sept. 12 and 26 Community Care 55+ Lunch $17, noon
Saturday 20 Open Mic 2-6 p.m. **Sept. 27** corn roast 3 p.m. $1 each, Sept. 27 nacho average trivia night 7p.m.
Sundays, Sept. 14 L.A breakfast $10. 9-11a.m., **Sept. 28** nacho average trivia night 7 p.m.

Hours:

Monday: open 7 to 10 p.m.
Tuesday: closed, special events only
Wednesday: open 2 to 10 p.m.
Thursday: open 2 to 10 p.m.
Friday: open 2 to 11 p.m.
Saturday: open 2 to 9 p.m.
Sunday September 14 L.A Breakfast $10. 9 to 11 a.m.
Veteran's appreciation dinner Sept. 23. Tickets are $20 each. Veterans and their spouse are free. Cocktails start at 4:30 p.m. Dinner to follow.

EVENTS

Sept. 11, 4:15 and 7:15 p.m. kick off the fall with Those Other Movies. Featuring *A Nice Indian Boy* at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion. $10 per film or $70 for a season's pass. Passes can be reserved on their website. Bring payment – cash or cheque - to the movies. https://www.thoseothermovies.com/

Sept. 13, 1 to 4 p.m. The final week Of Light and Life, an exhibit by world renowned artist Michael Dumas. Features an extensive collection of 76 works, from preliminary sketches and studies to completed studio drawings and paintings. Runs until Sept. 13 at the Agnes Jamieson Gallery. Michael will be onsite Sept 13 with an artist talk at 1:30 p.m., followed by a book signing of *Algonquin Legacy: the art of Michael Dumas.*

Sept. 15, 10 a.m. Haliburton veterans' annual Decoration Day at St. Anthony and Evergreen cemeteries on Pine Street in Haliburton. Pay respect to all of our military men and women – past and present. For more information, visit haliburtonlions.com or haliburtonlegion.com.

Sept. 15, the new term of classes for Scottish Country Dancing will begin on Mon. Sept. 15. Doors open at 7:15 p.m. and class starts promptly at 7:30 p.m. Class runs until just after 9 p.m. Classes are located at Haliburton United Church (10 George St.) in Haliburton. Cost is $110 for the term (cash or e-transfer) or drop in for $10 cash per class. First class is free but rsvp to haliburtonscottishcountrydance@gmail.com so they know to expect you. Indoor shoes (preferably soft soled) are required as no outdoor shoes are allowed in the Fellowship room. Bring a water bottle and wear comfortable clothes you can sweat and move in. No experience or partner is needed.

Sept. 16-18, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. - If you have extra apples on your property this fall, SIRCH would love for you to share them. They make applesauce and apple desserts — nourishing families, children, and neighbours in the community through their Community Kitchen Program. Drop off at 49 Maple Ave.

Sept. 18-21, Corduroy Enduro. This gruelling two-day off-road motorcycle event attracts hundreds of riders every fall. This year's course features extreme sections, river crossings, MX tests and an ISDE-style bike impound. There are also non-competitive trail rides, demo rides, parts, gear and more available. Visit corduroyenduro.ca for more information.

Sept. 18-21, Hike Haliburton Festival returns, with lots of options for people to choose from. Visit the website at festival.hikehaliburton.com to secure your spot on one of dozens of guided hikes throughout the Highlands.

Sept. 18, Youth Unlimited is hosting a golf tournament at the Haliburton County Golf Club. Contact the Youngs at haliburton@kawyu.ca to inquire about registering ($75 per golfer, nine holes, cart and lunch. Best ball, shotgun start) or making a donation. You can also visit their website at www.yfc.ca/haliburton-highlands. All donations go towards funding after-school programs for the upcoming school year.

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What's on

Rock on for food bank

Bob Lake's fourth annual 'Rock the Dock' event raised a record $6,345 for the Minden Community Food Centre this summer – bringing the four-year total to $18,295. An all-Canadian playlist by the Bo Blake Band kept the crowd energized throughout the afternoon, with the highlight being the return of the raffle, introduced in 2024, which "was a major success and helped boost fundraising efforts," said Pamela England, a member of the Bob Lake Association. "It's truly inspiring to see how our community comes together for a great cause." The Minden food bank is open Tuesday and Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., with hours expanded to 4:30 p.m. on the first and third Wednesday of the month. Manager, Jean Munroe, reported an 18 per cent increase in demand through the first quarter of 2025. In 2024, it served 3,248 people, averaging 271 visits per month. *(Mike Baker)*

Left to right, Dave Roberts, organizer Pamela England and Joe Cacioppo were all smiles as Bob Lake raised $6,295 at its 'Rock the Dock' event this summer. *Photo submitted.*

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FOR SALE – Brand New water proof Hydroplank flooring, 100 cases available, Gocko Bayou, less than 1/2 price at $30. Per case or Best Offer. Call Jim at 705-928-8496

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ANNIVERSARY

GARDENING

OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of

James L. Hicks (Jim)

Jim passed away peacefully of natural causes on Saturday, September 6, 2025 at the age of 95, with family on the shore of Lake Boshkung.

Jim was the beloved husband of Mary (deceased) and father of five children; Bill (Kathy), Bruce (Cheri, deceased), Brad (Karen), Cindy (Ron, deceased) and Barry (Derrick). Jim's first wife, Carolyn (deceased), was the mother of their five children.

With his extended family; Debbie (Shea), Denise (Bill) and Beth (Dave), Jim was the proud grandfather of 22 grandchildren: Brittany (Taylor), Brett (Rachel), Spencer, Gavin (Dani), Brady (Rachel), Rob (Brittney), Ben (Victoria), Ali, Brigitta, Charlene (Nick), Christa (Eric), Emma (Mark), Chris, Emily (Chris), Katie, Kristen (David), Brenden, Ryan, Jason (Lou), Sean, Heather (deceased), Todd, and 12 Great Grandchildren: Rome, Naia, Aila, James, Heidi, Liam, Addison, Owen, Rachel, Wylie, Barrett and Millie. Jim's brother Frank, (Joanne, both deceased), and sister Barb (deceased) (Bill) and all of their offspring add many more to the extended family.

Jim was born and raised in Buffalo, NY and after serving two years in the US Army during the Korean war, he moved to Toronto where he engaged in teacher training and spent 33 years in that profession—the last 25 as an elementary Principal in Peel County. After retiring in 1986, he and his wife Mary moved to Haliburton County, where he worked construction for Jim Howe, drove a school bus, worked for Kinark and then served for 15 years on the Councils of Stanhope Township and Algonquin Highlands Township.

Jim first came to Haliburton in 1936 as a camper at Camp Calumet on Boshkung Lake. He spent 26 summers there, missing only two, during the Korean War. He loved everything about Haliburton, including that his children and some of his grandchildren and great grandchildren are now residents of the County. He enjoyed spending time with his family, especially at family dinners and their lakeside saunas.

During his long and happy retirement, Jim also served on the Board of Staanworth Non-profit Housing, the Minden Community Food Centre, Zion Church and the Highland Hills Charge of the United Church. For a few years Jim and Mary enjoyed their winters in Florida. In later years he enjoyed the many activities provided by the HHHS at Hyland Crest and at Staanworth Terrace where he lived for 7 years.

Jim left his body to the University of Toronto for medical research. Jim's wish was that no formal service be held. At a later date, a gathering will be held for those who wish to remember Jim.

In lieu of flowers, donations are suggested for: Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF), The Minden Community Food Centre, or to Highland Hills United Church and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

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HELP WANTED

Employment Opportunity
Municipality of Dysart et al

Public Works Equipment Operator
(permanent, full-time)

Reporting to the Operation Manager the successful applicant will have sound knowledge and methods, tools, and equipment required for the general maintenance of the municipal road system including bridges, culverts, drainage, and other roads / property. Primary duties include, but not limited to operations of a sidewalk plow, dump truck (with sander/snowplow), backhoe, loader and grader.

Self-motivated applicants must be able to work outdoors in all weather with minimal supervision. A valid Ontario 'A' or 'D' licence (manual) with 'Z' endorsement is required along with an acceptable abstract. Pursuant to CUPE Local #2142 the rate of pay is $28.88 per hour based on a 40-hour work week. Pension and Benefits after a 6-month probationary period.

Upon final selection, the applicant will be required to provide, at their own expense, a Criminal Record and Judicial Matters check from the Ontario Provincial Police or appropriate police force.

The detailed job description is available on our website www.dysartetal.ca/careers
Interested individuals are invited to email a detailed resume and cover letter to:

Sonja Marx, HR Manager
hr@dysartetal.ca
No Later Than 12:00 pm Friday September 19th, 2025.

*** We thank all who apply; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Accommodations for applicants with disabilities will be provided upon request. The Municipality of Dysart et al is an equal opportunity employer. Personal information is collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and will be used only for employment purposes. ***

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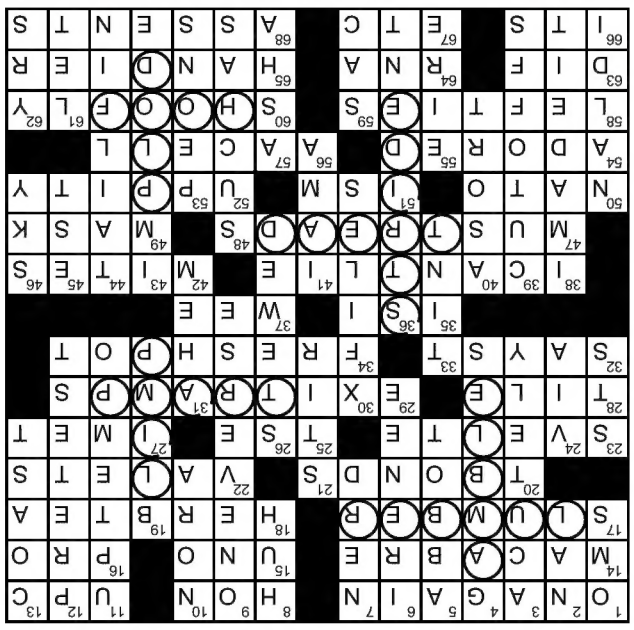

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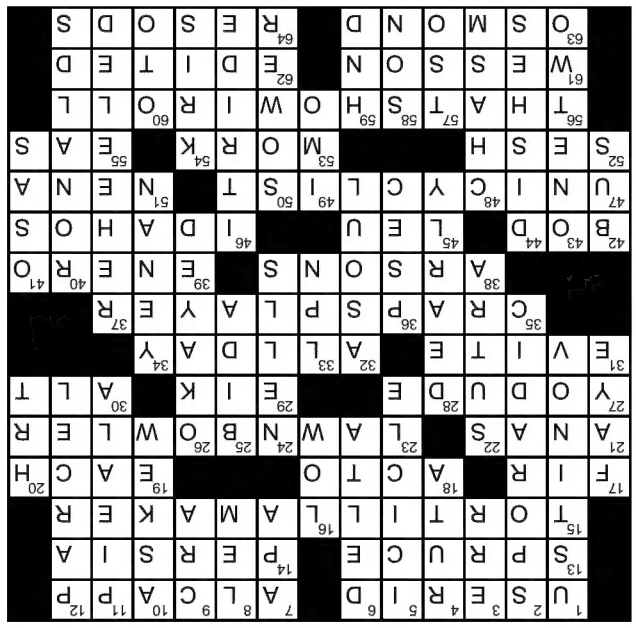

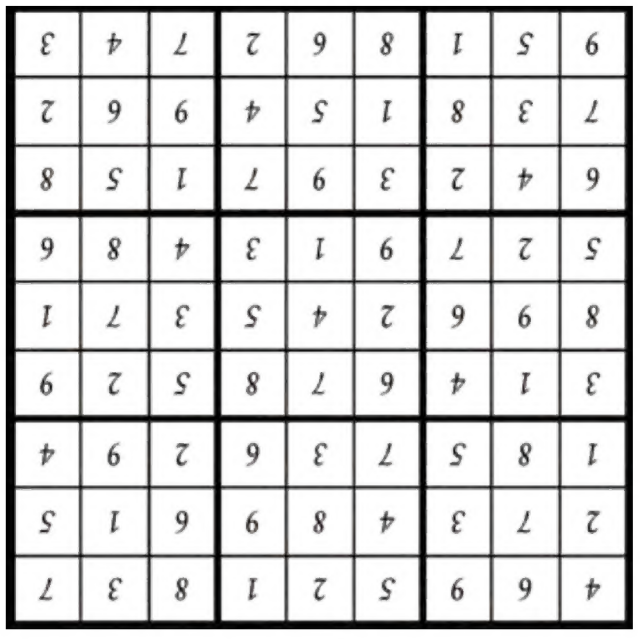

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NOTICE

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS - Sundays - 10:30 am at St. Anthony's, 27 Victoria Street Haliburton. Wednesdays - 7:00 PM at Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle St. in Minden - rear door. Thinking about alcohol. Thinking about stopping. We've been there. We can help!

AL ANON- WE CARE, are you troubled by someone's drinking? Meetings: Thursdays 7 p.m., St. Anthony's 27 Victoria Street, Haliburton, and Mondays 7 p.m. at Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle, Rear Entrance, Minden. 1-888-4AL-ANON (1-888-425-2666) al-anon.org All are welcome.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS Admission is free and the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. This meeting is for addicts only. New meeting in Haliburton that meets every Thursday from 7:30-8:30 p.m. in the Link Building. 5152 County Rd 21. For more information and an online version visit www.cloana.org or call 1-888-811-3887

OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of

Clarke, SM Lee

September 16, 1937 – September 4, 2025

The family of Lee Clarke shares his passing on September 4, 2025, with deep love and gratitude for his long and full life. Born on September 16, 1937, to Kay (Bredin) and Glen Clarke, Lee grew up in Lindsay, ON, where he was a high school cadet before attending Royal Roads Military College in Victoria, BC. He later worked in construction and at the Levack mines before following his true calling in education. Lee graduated from Peterborough Teachers' College in 1963 and began teaching with Pickering School Area #2. In 1964, Lee married Pat (Francis), and together they raised two children, Glen (1965) and Kathleen (1969). The family settled in Wilberforce, Ontario, where Lee dedicated three decades to teaching with the Haliburton County School Board until his retirement in 1995. Never one to sit still, Lee founded TMIAC Boats, where he built and repaired canoes and joined the Wooden Canoe Builder's Guild. His craftsmanship reflected his lifelong love of the outdoors. Lee had many passions, including music, especially playing guitar, as well as sports such as karting, car racing, and skiing. Above all, he was proud of his family and loved time with his grandchildren, Nicole and Owen. Lee is survived by his loving wife Pat, his children Glen and Kathleen, his grandchildren Nicole and Owen, his brother, Jed Bowen of British Columbia, and a large extended family of nieces, nephews, and cousins. The family would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the staff at Winchester Hospital and Southbridge Kemptville for their excellent care and compassion. In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations be made to the Alzheimer Society of Canada in Lee's memory. Lee will be remembered for his kindness, creativity, and the adventurous spirit he carried throughout his life. Celebration of Life for Lee will be held on October 11, 2025, at the Lloyd Watson Community Center in Wilberforce from 1:30-4:00.

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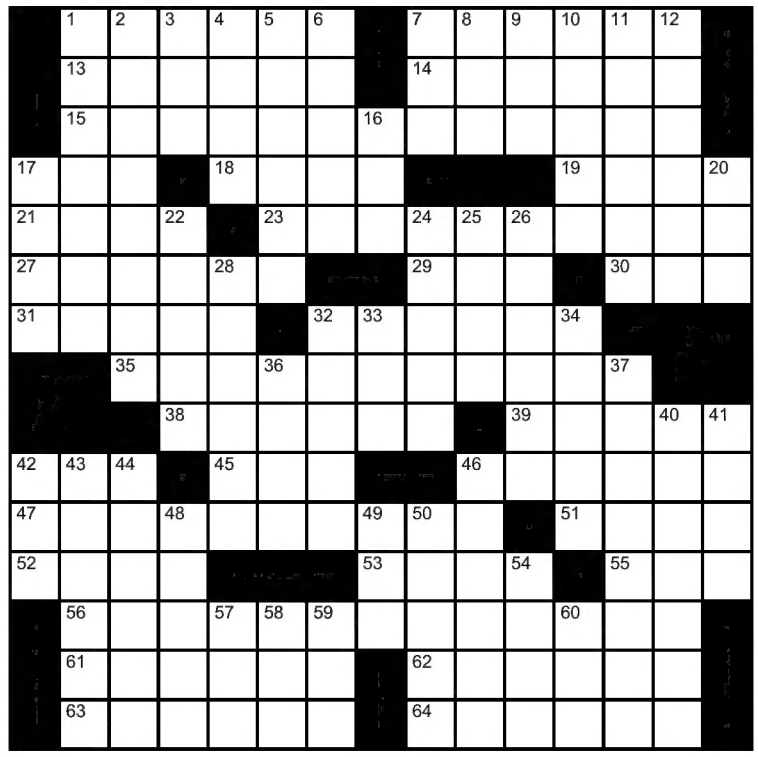
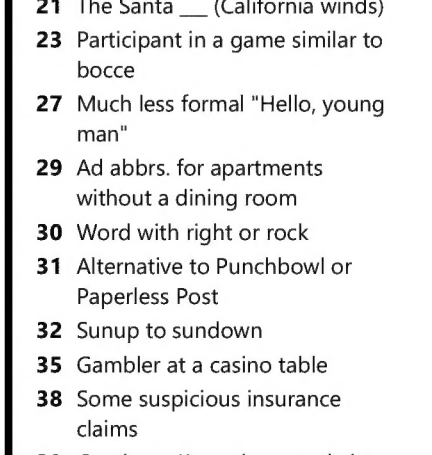


Across

1 Computer entry code
7 Li'l Abner's creator
13 Make snazzy, with "up"
14 Iran, formerly
15 Mexican cook, at times
17 "Douglas" tree
18 X-___ (blade brand)
19 A pop
21 The Santa ___ (California winds)
23 Participant in a game similar to bocce
27 Much less formal "Hello, young man"
29 Ad abbrs. for apartments without a dining room
30 Word with right or rock
31 Alternative to Punchbowl or Paperless Post
32 Sunup to sundown
35 Gambler at a casino table
38 Some suspicious insurance claims
39 Capricorn/Aquarius month, in Spain
42 Gym rat's pride, for short
45 Romanian coin
46 Boise's state spuds
47 Circus clown pedaler
51 Singer of "99 Luftballons"
52 Brief meeting?
53 Robin Williams in a sitcom
55 "... spelled with ___ in 'eagle'"
56 Comment made by a 15-, 23-, 35- and 47-Across, perhaps?
61 Smith's partner in guns
62 Trimmed the literary fat
63 '70s poster boy Donny
64 Establishes new turf?

Down

1 Peter who portrayed Poirot
2 Off and on
3 Do this on the side of caution
4 ___ Lee of old game shows
5 Winter eave clinger
6 Muddy mouth
7 U.S. therapist's org.
8 Moon vehicle
9 Where a phone scammer claims to be calling from, often: Abbr.
10 Cockeyed
11 Dessert words before mode
12 Part partner
16 Like a limbo dancer
17 Actress Dunaway
20 Menopause treatment option, briefly
22 Kama ___ (Hindu text)
24 Actresses Hudson and Gwyn
25 ___ fond farewell
26 Rubber-stamped
28 With deep affection
32 Nary ___
33 Medical care aide: Abbr.
34 Northern Chinese city
36 Tiny time piece: Abbr.
37 Fixed a pump, in a way
40 Reagan and McDonald
41 Mama bears, in Mazatlán
42 Otto's wheels in Springfield
43 "The old" boxing move
44 Serves the dirt
46 BTO's "Let ___"
48 Gaping gap
49 Texter's "If you ask me"
50 Garden planter
54 The Highwaymen singer with Johnny, Willie and Waylon
57 General on a Chinese menu
58 Justin, to Pierre
59 Ten tens: Abbr.
60 Prefix with -laryngologist



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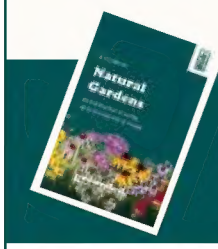

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MLS X12182250

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